

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

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1. (currently amended) A billing system for automatically charging a call to a predetermined telephone line, the billing system comprising:
- a. a service configured to receive an incoming call from a calling party and to initiate an outgoing call to a called party;
  - b. a switch coupled to the predetermined telephone line configured to store billing information in response to a triggering event; and
  - c. a control point coupled to the service, the calling party, and the switch wherein the control point is configured to activate the triggering event in response to receiving an appropriate signal from the service and to transfer the incoming call from the service to the called party such that the calling party and the called party are connected thereby forming the outgoing call, wherein the billing information corresponding to the incoming outgoing call is stored in the switch and the stored billing information is used to charge the predetermined telephone line.
2. (original) The billing system according to claim 1 wherein the service is a voice messaging system.
3. (previously presented) The billing system according to claim 1 further comprising an additional switch coupled to the control point configured to transfer the call from the service to the called party wherein the calling party and the called party are connected and the service is disconnected.
4. (previously presented) The billing system according to claim 1 wherein the predetermined telephone line is set as a specific telephone line by the calling party.
5. (cancelled)
6. (currently amended) A method of billing a call to a predetermined telephone line wherein a user initiates the call from a calling party to a called party through a service, comprising the

3 following steps:

- 4 a. conveying data from the service to a control point, wherein the data indicates ~~the~~  
5 ~~predetermined telephone line, and the called party, the called party~~ and the calling  
6 party;  
7 b. temporarily routing the call to a switch associated with the predetermined  
8 telephone line;  
9 c. forming a new call originating from the calling party and terminating at the called  
10 party;  
11 d. storing billing information related to the new call in the switch associated with the  
12 predetermined telephone line in response to a signal initiated by the service; and  
13 e. automatically billing the new call to the predetermined telephone line using the  
14 stored billing information.

1 7. (previously presented) The method according to claim 6 further comprising activating a  
2 terminating attempt trigger in the switch associated with the predetermined telephone line.

1 8. (previously presented) The method according to claim 7 wherein storing billing  
2 information on the switch is in response to activating the terminating attempt trigger.

1 9. (previously presented) The method according to claim 8 wherein the stored billing  
2 information includes a call duration of the new call and a particular feature utilized during the  
3 new call.

1 10. (previously presented) The method according to claim 6 further comprising setting a  
2 telephone line as the predetermined telephone line.

1 11. (previously presented) The method according to claim 6 wherein the calling party is not  
2 at the predetermined telephone line.

1 12. (previously presented) The method according to claim 6 wherein the calling party is the  
2 predetermined telephone line.

1 13. (previously presented) A method of billing a call to a predetermined telephone line  
2 wherein a user initiates the call through a service from a calling party to a called party,  
3 comprising the following steps:

- 4 a. conveying call data from the service to a control point wherein the control point is  
5 coupled to the calling party, the predetermined telephone line, and the called  
6 party;  
7 b. terminating the call to the service;  
8 c. forming a new call to link the calling party to the called party;  
9 d. storing billing information related to the new call on a switch associated with the  
10 predetermined telephone line in response to a signal initiated by the service; and  
11 e. automatically billing the new call to the predetermined telephone line using the  
12 stored billing information.

1 14. (original) The method according to claim 13 further comprising temporarily connecting  
2 the call to the predetermined telephone.

1 15. (previously presented) The method according to claim 14 further comprising the  
2 following steps:

- 3 a. terminating the call to the predetermined telephone line; and  
4 b. automatically querying the control point via a terminating attempt trigger located  
5 within the switch associated with the predetermined telephone line in response to  
6 terminating the call to the predetermined telephone line.

1 16. (previously presented) The method according to claim 15 wherein storing the billing  
2 information related to the new call on the switch is in response to querying the control point.

1 17. (previously presented) The method according to claim 16 wherein the stored billing  
2 information includes a call duration of the new call and a particular feature utilized during the  
3 new call.

1 18. (previously presented) The billing system according to claim 1 wherein the control point  
2 activates the triggering event in response to the service initiating the outgoing call to the called  
3 party.

1 19. (previously presented) The billing system according to claim 1 wherein the switch is  
2 configured to transfer the call from the service to the called party wherein the calling party and  
3 the called party are connected and the service is disconnected.

1 20. (previously presented) The billing system according to claim 1 wherein the stored billing  
2 information includes a call duration of the new call and a particular feature utilized during the  
3 new call.

1 21. (previously presented) The billing system according to claim 1 wherein the calling party  
2 is not at the predetermined telephone line.

1 22. (previously presented) The billing system according to claim 1 wherein the calling party  
2 is the predetermined telephone line.

1 23. (previously presented) The method according to claim 13 wherein the calling party is not  
2 at the predetermined telephone line.

1 24. (previously presented) The method according to claim 13 wherein the calling party is the  
2 predetermined telephone line.

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